



**STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS
FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
LOS ANGELES COUNTY
COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 739
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
<http://lachildrenscommission.org>**

Monday, November 2, 2015

10:00 AM

AUDIO LINK FOR THE ENTIRE MEETING. (15-5273)

Attachments: [AUDIO](#)

Present: Commissioner Geneva Berger, Commissioner Carol O. Biondi, Commissioner Maria Brenes, Commissioner Patricia Curry, Commissioner Ann E. Franzen, Commissioner Wendy Garen, Commissioner Sydney Kamlager, Commissioner John Kim, Commissioner Liz Seipel, Commissioner Janet Teague, Vice Chair Jacquelyn McCroskey, Vice Chair Wendy B. Smith and Chair Sunny Kang

Absent: Commissioner Candace Cooper and Commissioner Adrienne Konigar-Macklin

I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Call to Order. (15-4758)

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kang at 10:00 a.m.

2. Introductions of the November 2, 2015 meeting attendees. (15-4759)

Self-introductions were made.

3. Approval of the minutes from the meeting of October 19, 2015. (15-4761)

On motion of Vice Chair Smith, seconded by Commissioner Seipel (Commissioners Biondi, Cooper, Garen, Kim, Konigar-Macklin, and McCroskey being absent), this item was approved.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

II. REPORTS

4. Chair's report for November 2, 2015. (15-4762)

Chair Kang reported the following:

- **The next Commission meeting scheduled for Monday, November 16, 2015, will be held in Room 374-A. There is another meeting scheduled in this room that begins at 12 p.m. therefore, the Commission will end its meeting at 11:30 a.m.;**
- **The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) invited Commissioners to attend its Annual Data LOG scheduled for Wednesday, November 18, 2015 in Montebello. The focus will be on the Core Practice Model and Strategic Planning. For more information or to RSVP, please contact Executive Director Tamara N. Hunter, MSW;**
- **DCFS also extended an invitation to their Foster and Relative Caregiver Recruitment, Retention and Support Funding Planning Meeting. This meeting is to receive stakeholder input on how new funding from the State should be used to support relative and foster caregivers as part of Continuum of Care Reform. The State is requiring Counties to provide proposals that include a plan on how they are going to spend their money by reporting how many families they need to recruit, how they will do it and how much it will cost by December 1, 2015. The meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 9, 2015, 2 - 4 p.m. at DCFS Headquarters. Please contact Ms. Hunter if you are planning to attend.**

5. Executive Director's update on Retreat

- **Elizabeth Sadlon, Facilitator (15-4763)**

Tamara N. Hunter, MSW, Executive Director, announced that the retreat will be held Monday, February 1, 2016 at the Palevsky Center in Downtown between 2nd and 3rd Streets on Figueroa. An email will be sent out with detailed information within the next few weeks. Ms. Hunter introduced Elizabeth Sadlon who will facilitate the retreat and noted that Ms. Sadlon will be reaching out to all Commissioners prior to the retreat.

Ms. Sadlon thanked the Commission for the opportunity to speak on today's agenda and indicated that she is a facilitator focused on working with community benefit organizations, both public and nonprofit, who focus on different social justice issues. She is also an independent

consultant that works with a Team appropriate for the project. Ms. Sadlon indicated that this retreat is an exciting and important moment considering the mix of new and longtime Commissioners working together with the now emerging work of Office of Child Protection and the importance of figuring out who has what role and how the Commission can have the greatest impact moving forward. Ms. Sadlon is looking at ensuring everyone has a voice in guiding how the day is designed and the work that is done together. One task is ensuring everyone does their homework prior to the retreat to maximize the time spent together; and that specific results are identified, aiming to build on those beyond that day making it a part of the Commission's ongoing work together. Ms. Sadlon will reach out to each Commissioner to discuss planning and engage in the work together; she indicated that she will stay and observe and hear what is important in the work that the Commission is doing and how everyone works together and looks forward to connecting in the coming weeks.

6. Department of Children and Family Services Report. (15-4765)

Cynthia McCoy-Miller, Senior Deputy Director, Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), reported the following on behalf of Philip L. Browning, Director, DCFS:

- On November 10, 2015 the Board of Supervisors will declare November as Adoptions Awareness Month and will also recognize and honor five foster children for their academic achievements as part of Mayor Supervisor Antonovich's quarterly Enrichment Plus Award presentation. Also, the KTTV Los Angeles Fox 11 News Team will be honored and recognized for their commitment to promoting adoptions and their 20 Year Anniversary broadcasting the weekly Wednesday's Child segment; included among the team honorees is Christine Divine, News Anchor, who has individually contributed and sustained the Wednesday's Child program for two decades. Another honoree is a Second District adoptive parent who adopted her son after recognizing him on Wednesday's Child and learning that the reunification was not successful, she has been an adoptive and foster parent for over 15 years, fostering over 300 children.
- November 16, 2015 is the Annual National Adoption Day at the Courts; on November 20, 2015, as a result of the ongoing partnership between DCFS, Children's Court, Alliance for Children's Rights, and the Public Counsel, the courts will hold their 16th Annual National Adoption Day; 163 adoptions are expected to be finalized that day.

- As referenced by the Chair, the LOG is scheduled for November 18, 2015, all are encouraged to attend. The focus will be geared towards the Department's strategic plan for the next three years, starting January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2018. The strategic plan will include incomplete initiatives from the previous plan, as well as new initiatives based on recommendations from the Blue Ribbon Commission, the Board, mandates, the Commission's initiatives, and feedback from stakeholders and advocates, internal and external.
- Ms. McCoy-Miller shared the following reunification and adoption data available for Fiscal Year 2014-2015:
 - o 5,050 children were reunified, of which 58% were reunified within 12 months of removal from their home;
 - o 1,443 children were adopted, of which 20.4% were adopted within 24 months of removal from their home;
 - o 1,589 Terminations of Parental Rights (TPR), which was an increase of 5% over the previous fiscal year;
 - o The median time for case start date to TPR was 24.8 months; and,
 - o The median time from TPR to adopt finalization was 8.7 months.

In response to questions posed by the Commission regarding support money for foster care plans, Diane Iglesias, DCFS, responded as follows:

An All-County Letter (ACL) was sent to all Counties in the State that indicated that there is 14.5 million in funding available; the letter also included a defined framework for the plan that must be submitted by December 1, 2015. Funds will be distributed to different Counties at different times, it will be incremental and is not based on the number of children; this is a new and unusual process. Based on stake holder meetings and input from advocates several initiatives have already been presented.

Additionally, at the November 9, 2015 meeting, everyone is encouraged to participate to discuss updates regarding initiatives already presented to the State, initiatives received from stakeholders and advocates, and any additional data collected will be presented.

- The Annual DCFS Family Fun Day Picnic is scheduled for November 7, 2015; all are invited.

III. PRESENTATIONS

7. Juvenile Probation Outcomes Study Interagency Workgroup & 241.1 Annual Report Summary of Findings

- Denise Herz, Ph.D. Cal State University Los Angeles (15-5122)

Denise C. Herz, Ph.D., Director and Professor, School of Criminal Justice & Criminalistics, California State University Los Angeles, provided a presentation and general overview of the 241.1 Data and Probation Workgroup with the primary goal of combining the data with policy and practice to produce positive outcomes.

Dr. Herz stated that the data collection process with 241.1 Youth has been an extensive process. They began collecting data and reporting characteristics and outcomes of youth in 2004-2005. During that time there was no data system in place and collaborative efforts were combined with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), the Probation Department, the Department of Mental Health (DMH) and various educational consultants. Ms. Herz also provided the Commission with a brief history in detail.

Dr. Herz informed the Commission that 241.1 Youth is a Welfare Institution Reference Code that is required when a youth has dual system contact. Additionally, a hearing/assessment is conducted to determine the past history. In 2012 the Board of Supervisors passed a motion that required DMH to use the Mental Health Services Act Funds to pay for clinicians due to expansion and requested that data be collected on outcomes. The interagency system allowed both DMH and Probation access into the inter-disciplinary data collection system. Along with other partners, a data sub-committee worked to identify the types of data to be collected.

Ms. Herz referenced the following data included in the supporting document:

- Overview of Data & Methods
- 2014 Referrals & Disposition
- MDT recommendations and Court Dispositions
- Who were the 241.1 referrals?
- What were their offenses & how did they move through the juvenile justice system?
- Who attended MDT meetings?
- Tracked Youth at 6 Months After Disposition: Services and Outcomes
- Probation Workgroup

In response to questions posted by the Commission Ms. Hertz responded as follows:

- The system is capable of collecting good data however, a lot of DPO's data is in case notes and in narrative form and not easily pulled down to analyze. The Workgroup identified the challenges with the data system as a key issue to address this issue around key outcomes and measurement of outcomes. There are three Probation supervisors overseeing 100 kids and DCFS does not assign 241.1 youth to a specific supervisor;
- Statics show that 45% of 241.1 youth are African Americans and they are disproportionately re-presented, the numbers listed for Latinos are consistent with the general population;
- Dr. Herz indicated that she has limited knowledge regarding other groups in DMH looking into treatment and its effectiveness on youth however, the Probation Workgroup has been tasked with identifying continual services that relate to the level of need for probation youth;
- Judges make decisions based on the outcome as long as it is within the limit of the law; and
- Follow-up data can be obtained from different Probation offices and more is being implemented to show establish the connection.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

Crossover Youth

8.

- Barbara Duey, Crossover Resource Director, Children's Law Center of Los Angeles (15-5123)

Barbara Duey, Attorney Supervisor, Children's Law Center (CLC) provided the following overview of the history of what has created challenges today and the areas that need to be worked on:

- In the past, the law stated that a child cannot be a foster and probation youth at the same time and until 1997, there was no communication or identification of foster youth by the Courts. Ms. Duey explained that a child would lose their CLC attorney, their relationship with their social worker, continuity of services, therapy, education and placement once they moved over to Delinquency Court;

- In 2003, Juvenile Probation advised that there were 2,000 kids who completed all requirements however their cases were not closed to avoid releasing youth that did not have a safe place to go; in many cases 18 year olds were released to homelessness;
- Research was released on the trauma endured by foster youth making it more likely for them to enter into the juvenile justice system than a non-foster youth, simply because they were victims of abuse by a parent or guardian;
- CLC conducted a study of all states within the U.S. and it was discovered that California and Colorado were the only two states prohibiting youth from being on both sides;
- In 2004, California law was changed to allow Counties to create a dual status system where a youth can be in both systems requiring an agreement between the Presiding Judge, the Director of DCFS and the Chief Probation Officer;
- From 2004-2007, the Crossover Committee comprised of 30-40 members built a new dual status system and option which created the Multidisciplinary Team and allowed the foster youth to remain foster youth even though they went deeper in the justice system;
- The protocol created by the Committee had input from all stakeholders, was thorough and addressed everyone's issues. Everyone agreed on most of the issues that were agreeable, leaving the others for litigation, which was hard on the kids and families;
- In 2012, the protocol went Countywide and have seen good outcomes, while others were neutral;
- There has been an improvement in communication however, there is still a struggle between DCFS and Probation on how to handle dual status youth. It is clear that services are needed and the youth need the oversight of both departments;
- Often times, there is a disconnect between the Dependency and Delinquency Courts and information may differ depending on the hearing. Post disposition meetings are intended to inform the youth of what is needed to be successful and designed to allow each department representative to report on the services that each will provide, this report would then be sent to both courts for clarity. This reporting process is the part that creates the struggle, once the services are identified, case management is needed specifically for teenagers who can change dramatically from one month to the next;
- MSW Grad Students working with the CLC Care Unit are assigned five to six youth who they visit weekly for at least one month or as needed, they are in constant communication with Probation and DCFS and attend all hearings. Many times, the interns are the only ones who have all the pieces to the puzzle and they find their attendance is very helpful during the hearings. CLC is currently servicing 30 youth;

- Without CLC services, youth may not be able to stay current with required documents and meeting all requirements;
- Currently all foster youth qualify for dual status, there have been recent discussions regarding the safety of the community and disqualification of youth charged of more serious crimes, the revised protocol is pending;
- Focus should be on defining the roles of both courts and ensure everyone receives the information so that people know where to obtain information.
- An example was provided of the struggle in enrolling a youth in school who was assisted by CLC, the importance of communication was noted, specifically when a child is moved from one location to another.

In response to questions posed by Commissioners, Ms. Duey indicated that it is important for both courts to receive copies of post disposition meeting reports to ensure clarity of the role each department has in ensuring the success of the youth; and judges are encouraged to communicate so that everyone is on the same page.

9. Update on 241.1 Protocol Revisions

- DCFS Juvenile Court & Adoption Bureau:
 - Rhelda Shabazz, DCFS, Deputy Director
 - Wanda Harris, Division Chief
 - Wilhelmina Bradley, Assistant Regional Administrator
 - Mary Jo Cysewski, Children's Services Administrator
- Probation Department:
 - Dave Mitchell, Bureau Chief, Division I (15-5124)

Diana Iglesias, Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), provided an update on Welfare and Institution Code (WIC) 241.1 Protocol Revisions and indicated the following:

- The new protocol draft is in response to the June 2014 appellate case which included the review of approximately 600 cases in which the 241.1 protocol was not utilized;
- DCFS and the Probation Department continue to work in collaboration to ensure every child is eligible and receive the assistance that is required;

- A previously released draft was only a compilation of discussions and topics and is not the final version. Youth in Probation Camps and in the 707(b) WIC category will continue to be eligible for 241.1 WIC there is no need for concern that youth will not be eligible; the final draft will be reviewed by the Children's Deputies by the end of the week and then presented to the Presiding Judge the following week, after the Judge's review the stakeholders will have the opportunity to discuss and make changes to the draft, formalization of the document will be the final process;
- In response to the release of statistical data a plan to increase post Multi-disciplinary Team (MDT) meetings will be added to ensure services are being used;
- The following information was provided to clarify myths:
 - DCFS will take back Probation Camp Youth;
 - Youth in the 707(b) category will not be excluded;
 - Youth will not be removed from the Welcome Center and taken to camps, it is not legal;
 - There is a plan for Youth in Assembly Bill 12 that gives youth an opportunity to be heard in the Juvenile Dependency Court and ensure the use of extended foster care services.

Michael Levanas, Presiding Judge, Los Angeles Superior Court Juvenile Division, provided a brief update on the path the court is heading with the assistance of the new plan. Judge Levanas indicated that the plan is to cross train three Judges in the 241.1 protocol to ensure that understanding and communication is established.

In response to questions posed by the Commission, Ms. Iglesias, Judge Levanas and Michael Werner, Probation Department, responded as follows:

- The three judges that will be cross-trained will be from three different courts; the more complicated cases will be reviewed;
- Communication challenges have come in the areas of services and service delivery, to address the issue Probation staff is encouraged to conduct a follow-up on services and not assume they were provided; as part of a communication plan, a monthly follow-up call must be conducted by Probation officers with CSWs and service providers;
- More resources are needed to identify specialized intervention strategies with the assistance of the Department of Mental Health (DMH);
- Different views of the same case are not due to lack of communication but rather due to the difference in knowledge of each judge, the new plan will assist in providing more information to the both judges;

- The protocol should be finalized by July 2016; the final document will be presented to the Commission; and
- Some cases were not referred to post MDT meetings because they were either dismissed or changes were made

Commissioner Curry noted the importance of including the DMH in the new plan. Chair Kang asked DCFS staff to notify the Commission of upcoming stakeholder meetings.

IV. DISCUSSION/APPROVAL

10. Discussion and approval to submit a Board letter to the Board of Supervisors requesting Commission for Children and Families representation on the Los Angeles County Health Integration Advisory Board. (15-5103)

On motion of Commissioner Seipel, seconded by Commissioner Garen (Commissioners Berger, Cooper and Konigar-Macklin being absent), the Commission approved this item and directed the Executive Director to forward the letter to the Board of Supervisors on behalf of the Commission.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

V. MISCELLANEOUS

11. Announcements for the meeting of November 2, 2015. (15-4766)

Commissioner Seipel announced that an alternate is still needed to represent the Commission on the SLT (System Leadership Team); she is traveling and will not be able to attend the November meeting. Meetings are held the third Wednesday of every month at St. Anne's, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., on Occidental Blvd., anyone interested should contact Executive Director Tamara Hunter, MSW. Commissioner Smith expressed an interest however; she is unable to attend the November meeting.

Chair Kang also added that a volunteer is needed to fill the vacancy on the Court Trust Fund Oversight Committee; meetings are held two times a year. He also emphasized the importance of these committees having an outside voice and offering different ideas.

Chair Kang indicated that participation on these committees is voluntary, in the past there has been no limit on the amount of volunteers, determination on the number of representatives varies by group but can be based on Commissioner interest.

The bylaws allow the Chair to make a decision on who will be appointed to a committee if needed. Ms. Hunter will provide Commissioners with a list that identifies which positions are open or appointed and lists the time requirements for each position.

12. Matters not posted on the agenda, to be discussed and (if requested) placed on the agenda for action at a future meeting of the Commission, or matters requiring immediate action because of an emergency situation or where the need to take action arose subsequent to the posting of the agenda. (15-4768)

There were no matters presented.

13. Opportunity for members of the public to address the Commission on item(s) of interest that are within the jurisdiction of the Commission. (15-4771)

No members of the public addressed the Commission on this item.

14. Adjournment for the meeting of November 2, 2015. (15-4772)

The meeting adjourned at 11:57 a.m.